



Lower Deschutes River Management Area

News Release

Media Contacts: Robert Towne (541) 416-6766, JC Hanf (541) 416-6774

News and Information

For Immediate Release

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2003 Recreation Management Changes on the Lower Deschutes River:
Help Protect Your Public Lands!

CENTRAL OREGON—The Lower Deschutes River is an increasingly popular river for all kinds of recreationists. Thousands of people visit each year to enjoy its incredible fishing, exciting whitewater rapids and beautiful scenery. The river offers a variety of great opportunities for both day and overnight trips. The most popular types of recreation include fishing/hunting, boating, mountain biking and hiking. To enhance the protection of the Lower Deschutes River, the Bureau of Land Management has issued new regulations to ensure minimal environmental impacts by those visiting the river.

“These new requirements will enable us to protect the long-term health and sustainability of the Lower Deschutes River,” said Deschutes Resource Area Manager Robert Towne. “We want to inform visitors of these changes so they may plan their trips accordingly,” added Towne.

The new changes in management of the Lower Deschutes River are as follows:

1) Portable toilets are now required mandatory equipment on all overnight boating trips.

Because the river corridor experiences a high concentration of recreational use within a narrow strip of canyon land, it is unacceptable to bury human waste. This new requirement is administered and enforced under State OAR 736-040-0070 by Oregon State Police. For more information on what defines an approved portable toilet and where you can buy one, visit the website at www.or.blm.gov/Prineville. Maupin City Park and Heritage Landing (located at the river’s mouth) has “SCAT” Machines to clean your portable toilet for a usage fee of \$1.00.

2) Group size is limited to 16 people in Segments 1, 3 and 4. Group size is limited to 24 people in Segment 2. Group sizes will be enforced this season. Group size limit means the maximum number of people a group may have while recreating together within the river corridor. The major benefit of this measure is to spread out use on the river, thus creating experiences that are safe, comfortable and within acceptable limits. To identify the river Segments, look for the map on the www.or.blm.gov/Prineville website.

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3) **All overnight boaters in Segment 1 are encouraged to camp at a designated posted site.** A brown fiber flex post displaying the National Wild and Scenic River symbol and river mile marks campsites. To minimize disturbance to wildlife, soils and vegetation, please limit your camp to the already impacted area. To maximize optimal use of the campsites, please choose your camp according to group size.

4) **Dispersed campsite closures** were necessary to confine use to designated areas in an effort to further reduce resource and social impacts. The 2003 closures include:

- ❖ Mecca Flat Recreation Area: 2 upriver dispersed sites are closed and posted no camping. The main campground is open.
- ❖ Long Bend Recreation Area: 1 upriver and 4 downriver dispersed sites are closed and posted no camping. The main campground is open.
- ❖ Oak Springs Recreation Area: 1 upriver dispersed camping area is closed and posted no camping.
- ❖ All above sites remain available for day use.

5) In addition to the regulation changes, a number of primitive toilet sites have reached capacity and need to be closed. These sites are in remote, boat-in areas with limited access and include:

- ❖ Whiskey Dick (River Mile 78): Two pit toilets will be closed and replaced with one composting toilet this season.
- ❖ Upper and Middle Whitehorse (River Mile 76): Two pit toilets have been closed and removed. Portable toilets are required at these boat-in campsites.
- ❖ Lower Whitehorse (River mile 75): Two pit toilets will be closed and replaced with one composting toilet this season.

“We appreciate it when those who enjoy rafting and recreating on the river help to minimize the impacts by following the rules. We design and enforce these rules to protect the long term health of the river, which is designated as a National Wild and Scenic River,” added Towne. For more information about the Lower Deschutes River and to purchase your Boater Pass, visit our website at www.boaterpass.com (look for the “Lower Deschutes River Recreation Information” link).

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